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## MAVERICK

### CD REVIEWS - THE NEW RELEASES

#### D Pollard

##### SIDETRACKS

Uncle Dino Recordings

★★★

Rediscovered set of lo-fi Americana that veers between  
brutal and gentle



Dan Pollard's debut has had a twisty journey to its final release. Originally recorded in 2006 as a side project to his blues/punk band Delirium Tremors, it was shelved, then re-recorded in Bristol only for those recordings to be discarded, until finally he rediscovered the original tracks and got them out through the door. It's a good thing he did too, as this is a nice lo-fi slice of Americana that is an object lesson in the virtues of keeping it simple and letting the music shine through.

That said, while the vibe may be low, quite a lot of it is not listening for the faint-hearted as Pollard delivers some vicious (quite possibly self-) analysis. *Tough* rips into a 'jaded, tired entertainer' who is told by the narrator: 'all the while you'll spit your \*\*\*\*...well I hope you \*\*\*\*ing choke on it.' It doesn't get much better with album closer *Sell Your Baby Down The River* ('she don't have to know'), another brutally honest slice of reflection on a man who does what he has to do for himself and never mind the consequences for others, nor indeed with the ambivalent, arguably even questionable but undeniably sensuous love song *Hey Little Kitty*, about someone who had 'dyed black hair and a face full of secrets' and would be 'handy if she wasn't so young.'

Elsewhere things are a bit more gentle with *Sometimes* and *She's Got A Line* both largely conventional but ever so slightly skewed love songs and *Sweet Anna Lee* a straight ahead road ode. Overall this is an intriguing album with sharp emotional twists and turns and one that repays repeated listening. **Jeremy Searle**  
[www.dpollardmusic.com](http://www.dpollardmusic.com)

#### Eliza Lynn TOGETHER

Civility Records

★★★

Fan funded album, where the fans picked the cover songs

Eliza Lynn is an Asheville, North Carolina musician and TOGETHER is her fourth album and first of a promised pairing that will exclusively feature cover songs. The songs performed were suggested by fans, who then financially contributed to their recording as well as suggesting the instrumentation to be used and the production approach. Eliza calls those patrons her Circle of Support.

On TOGETHER Lynn's voice is supported by her acoustic guitar or banjo, the other session players being (her) co-producer Will Straughen (Dobro, lap steel harmony vocals), Jon Stickley (guitar, mandolin, harmony vocals), Rayna Gellert (fiddle) and Alia Clary (harmony vocals). As for the choice of songs, Old Crow Medicine Show alumni, Ketch Secor and Willie Watson, penned the opening gambit *We're All In This Together*, while Nashville 'factory songwriters' Tia Sillers and Mark D. Sanders furnish *I Hope You Dance* and Maia Sharp and Kim Richey the mandolin heavy *Red Dress*. The former title was a number one US country and top 20 pop hit for Lee Ann Womack, and went on to win the 2000 Best Country Song Grammy, plus the CMA and ACM Awards for Song Of The Year.

New England's Bill Morrissey and Scot Dougie MacLean contribute the contemporary folk music selections with, respectively, *Ellen's Tune* and *Thus Love Will Carry*, while folk/blues legend Doc Watson penned *Life Is Like A River*. The late Rev. James Cleveland was a gospel music giant and from his extensive song catalogue Lynn interprets *Sit Down Servant*. The penultimate selection *When The Leaves Come Falling Down* appeared on Van Morrison's 1999 album BACK TO TOP. Rolling Stone magazine's review of Van's album referred to the song as 'a Monet.' The album closes with the one of traditional folk's most covered tunes, namely *Shenandoah*.

To be honest allowing fans to select the songs smacks of a foolhardy endeavour. While the underlying fan-funded album principle is laudable, the end result lacks cohesion. **Arthur Wood**

<http://www.elizalynn.com/>

